LABOUR MONTHLY

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Election Outlook

R.P.D. on the two-party system in theory and practice

Light on Nyasaland

D. N. Pritt, Q.C., examines the Devlin Report

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A PRINTER SPEAKS OUT
Robert Willis, on the H-bomb, print and arbitration

THE SEVEN-POINT PEACE RESOLUTION (Full text)

THE LAST RADICAL
by Wilfred Macartney

TWENTY YEARS AFTER
Quaestor recalls what led up to September, 1939

Also: THE INTELLIGENT VOTER'S GUIDE, Councillors A. Wolffe, R. Short and P. Grimshaw; Leo McGree: and POLICE AND PICKETING, Fred Gannaway on recent experiences.

SEPTEMBER · 1959

One Shilling and Sixpence

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KNOWING YOUR OWN

ONE of life's biggest lessons is to learn that while no one does your fighting for you, many will fight along with you. It is when you are up against it, and fight back, that you come into your own. Then you find the question in the battlesong: 'Which side are you on?' being answered by 'Solidarity for ever!' You come to know your own, when put to the test. Any 'old Guard' Doubting Thomas who might have come to think that all militant spirit ended with him has only to look about him in the industrial field—and now in the political arena—as the fight-back mounts. More and more the younger men and women are getting to know their own in the conference hall, in pit, depot and workshop, at strike-bound factory gates—and on the stones outside. Our contributor Fred Gannaway, recounting some recent events in the printworkers' dispute, calls it 'a goldmine' of lessons; and he concludes: 'Experience is a good teacher.' The consequences of their fight-back, with the seven weeks' lockout now over, pending the ballot on terms and 'strings', are not at an end. The printworkers are the richer for it; we are all the richer for it. Whenever one section of the working class strikes such a goldmine of experience, it can open the way for us all to learn valuable lessons, the sooner to come into our own.

The printworkers' fight-back was also the fight of *Labour Monthly*, in more senses than one. This was true from the moment when by great efforts the July number, though reduced in size and with fewer copies, was got out before the stoppage began, to the emergency printing of the August issue—and of this number, for it still has to be produced under crisis conditions. Here I want to give some picture, however incomplete, of how *L.M.* readers responded to the circular we sent out in July explaining our situation. Some reacted by return with donations, generous in amount and in spirit. There was the unopened envelope with his expenses for attending a miners' union conference, which a reader thrust into my hand at the *Durham* Miners' Gala; the *Londoner* who called at the office with a substantial sum to ask what more he could do to help; another with £1 'on behalf of a person who wishes to remain nameless'. Those who could not send more nevertheless sent 'early this month, because of the lockout'. Amongst the first was one from *Cardiff*; 'to help you in this time of crisis and because I value *L.M.* highly after reading it ever since 1937. Glad to get this thirty bob off my mind before I go on holiday.' From *Yorkshire:* 'You must have been put to the test many times—this cheque just to oil the wheels.' A *Scotsman* sent 'ammunition for the struggle to bring about a change in foreign policy and in consequence in domestic policies here.' From *Gloucestershire* came 'sincere thanks to all concerned in the production and distribution of *L.M.* in this difficult period. I can think of no other way to help peace and socialism than by finance and increasing circulation.' An old stalwart wrote from *Derbyshire:* 'I have pasted your circular in the front of *L.M.* to remind me of the Fight-Back campaign. Although abridged the July number is as dynamic as ever. I was so pleased to read the speech by James Jarvie, which put me in mind of that other son of a blacksmith, Harry Quelch, last editor of *Justice*. My wife and I have only the pension so regret we cannot send more than 5s. towards the financial loss.' This was one of many compliments on 'a splendid July number', and references to the printworkers' struggle and their 10 per cent. A *South Coast* reader was 'sorry you had to cut it down, but we must help it

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

Election Outlook

WHAT is the outlook for the approaching election? Will Premier Macmillan's heavily discredited Ministry be cleared out? Can a decisive Labour majority be won? At first glance it might seem amazing that such questions should need to be posed. Toryism has been in the saddle for eight years. After two successful elections in its favour, the mere automatism of the pendulum might have been assumed to guarantee a change. And in fact the weights are even more heavily loaded against it.

Since the tottering Balfour Ministry of the beginning of the twentieth century, damned by the shameful record of the Boer War and Chamberlainite jingo imperialism, went down to its just doom in 1906, no modern Government has been so heavily dishonoured by its record in facing the electorate as the present Tory Government (for the notorious Munichite Government of Neville Chamberlain never faced the electorate, but produced its delayed effect in the Tory collapse of 1945). The infamy of the Suez War, whose most ardent champion was Mr. Macmillan, exceeds any previous example of cynical imperialist aggression, followed by impotent fiasco and humiliation. Hola. Nyasaland. The Devlin Report. Surrender to the United States over the Summit. Not to mention the home record of increased unemployment; re-

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dundancies ; pit closures ; the credit squeeze ; swollen capital gains and rent inflation ; the old people at the end of the queue ; the Bank Rate Leak Tribunal revelations of ' anti-British ' profit-making manoeuvres and speculations against the pound in the highest places of Toryism and the City ; or the stagnation of productive advance even in comparison with other leading capitalist countries, let alone the soaring socialist world.

It might have been thought that, in face of such a damning record. at the very moment of the new triumphs of socialist construction which can no longer be denied (' unparalleled in history ' in Mr. Macmillan's words), even Mr. Gaitskell, with all his undoubted genius for snatching defeat from the jaws of victory, could hardly perform the political miracle of handing over the coveted hat-trick to this Tory Government at the coming election.

Why the Doubts ?

Why, then, the doubts, hesitations and gloomy prognostications so freely expressed on all sides ? It is of course completely understandable that the governmental and official publicity machinery and the big press should seek in every way to spread a miasma of defeatism and pessimism in Labour's ranks. The invincible, ' unflappable ' Mr. Macmillan, we are told, is riding high on a rising crest of popularity ; the nation is booming and prosperous and well-pleased ; Labour is hopelessly riven with divisions. All this is the commonplace small change of electioneering But when echoes of a corresponding negative outlook, cautious scepticism, and lack of confidence and enthusiasm reveal themselves among many of Labour's representatives, this is a more serious matter and needs to be taken seriously. For signs of this are not confined to the right wing, but can also be found among some disheartened and disillusioned left wing fighters, who should normally be inspiring enthusiasm for the battle. It is evident that the problem here revealed needs to be tackled at the outset if the working class and socialist movement, as well as all supporters of peace and opponents of reaction, are to make the best use of the coming election.

Tipping the Odds

When a leading Labour representative high up in the councils of the party, with sympathies to the left rather than to the right, and himself a hard-headed and experienced organiser of electoral victory in his own sphere, who is reputed to have the engaging habit of making a book on electoral predictions, is recently reported to have offered ten to one

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against an optimist who ventured to predict a Labour majority of thirty, and even odds on the prospect of a narrow majority in the range of half a dozen, this is hardly a very sanguine outlook in the face of a Tory Government trying to win a third election victory after eight years. Some among the left on Labour's side are even reported to have predicted wryly an inevitable defeat as the best thing that could happen, since it would finally discredit and bring to an end the present right wing leadership and policies. Such counsels of despair are no happy augury for the eve of battle. ' If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle ? ' There is, therefore, every reason to bring into the open at the outset these preliminary doubts, in order to defeat them, if there is to be an effective election fight. For these difficulties are bound up with the problem of the present political situation in Britain and, specifically, of the present stage of the political labour movement. To clarify this, it is necessary, with the reader's indulgence, to make a short excursion into the realm of theory.

Theory of Free Elections

The Western system of free elections, as they are called, under monopoly capitalism, which has only been won by tenacious struggle of the working class and democratic movement, and which is now vociferously proclaimed by the champions of wealth and privilege as the only genuine, absolute, eternal and perfect system of democracy, has evolved under certain temporary historical conditions, and is subject to certain inherent limitations which need to be taken into account by political realists. The working class has fought for the rights of free elections and parliamentary democracy (universal suffrage, rights of political organisations and parties, and election of a democratic representative parliament with full sovereignty) as the most favourable form of capitalist rule for mobilising the fight against capitalism towards the aim of socialism. The working class continues and will continue to defend such institutions against any alternative more reactionary form of capitalist rule (fascism, presidential rule, emergency decree systems). The ruling capitalist class on the other hand, has in general only conceded free elections and parliamentary democracy (usually with heavy checks and balances in practice) only in those cases and to the extent that they are satisfied that conditions have been successfully created to guarantee that the outcome will not endanger their regime. The attitude of the ' free world ', in other words, to their favourite slogans of ' free elections ' and ' democracy ' has nothing in common with the pure, abstract, absolute ideal principles they profess to proclaim, but is entirely pragmatic and governed by circumstances.

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Circumstances Alter Cases

Thus the Western powers clamour for immediate 'free elections' under international supervision in Germany, because they are satisfied that three-quarters of the German population has been soaked with nationalist, racial, anti-communist and anti-Soviet doctrines for twenty-six years, the regime of monopoly capitalism and the militarists finally established, the Nazis brought back to leading positions, and Communism and progressive propaganda suppressed as a penal offence. Obviously an ideal situation for immediate 'free elections'. On the other hand, in Korea and Vietnam, where the internationally signed armistice agreements impose an obligation on the Powers through their Commission to arrange for free elections in order to end the partition and make possible a democratically elected Government of the united country, the Western powers steadily block and oppose every proposal to carry out the pledge of free elections, because they know that the result would sweep away the corrupt tyrannies maintained in the southern regions by their dollars and arms. Syngman Rhee, champion of the 'free world', recently held a presidential 'election' and has now hanged the individual who offered himself as a rival candidate. In Laos, Prince Souphanouvong, the leader of the democratic opposition which has been winning majority support at the polls, has been arrested in defiance of the Geneva Agreement. In Nyasaland, the Rhodesias or Kenya the demand of the African people for free elections and democratic suffrage is met with armed violence, shooting, killing, beating up, and wholesale imprisonment without trial by the British apostles of the 'free world' and 'pure democracy'. These peoples, it is explained, are not yet 'ripe' for free elections and democracy.

Lesson of Kerala

Especially significant in this respect is the recent dismissal of the Kerala Communist Government, despite its constitutional parliamentary majority. The Indian democratic revolution against imperialism and feudalism is still in progress, in its initial phase under the leadership of the national bourgeoisie, but moving over to its completion under the leadership of the working class in alliance with the peasantry, the intellectuals, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the most progressive sections of the national bourgeoisie. The form of the parliamentary democratic republic has corresponded to this transitional phase. In the conditions of mass upsurge the form of the parliamentary democratic republic was the only form through which the still relatively weak national bourgeoisie could hope to cover the reality of their rule. On the

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other hand, the working class and popular forces were still insufficiently developed in their political organisation and role to be ready to take over direct leadership; and the form of the parliamentary democratic republic was also the most favourable for their advance to winning the majority and thereby opening the way to the peaceful completion of the democratic revolution and beginning of the construction of socialism.

Parliamentary Democracy in a Non-Imperialist Country

Thus a certain compromise basis of common interest existed for the maintenance of the parliamentary democratic forms, within the framework of national unity against imperialism, for peace and for immediate tasks of economic reconstruction. The role of Premier Nehru has been a symbol and even keystone of the arch of this initial phase. It is true that the normal imperialist basis of parliamentary democracy (exploitation of colonial masses to provide the means for corruption of an upper section of the working class and popular leadership) was lacking, so that Western commentators have regarded parliamentary democracy in India as a brilliant anomaly and exception to be followed with breathless hope. But from the standpoint of the propertied interests in India the traditional hold of the Congress on the majority of the nation was regarded as the best guarantee against the potential menace of universal suffrage in the hands of the property-less masses in a non-imperialist country.

Anti-Democratic Offensive

This compromise basis has now been threatened by the dismissal of the Kerala Ministry—an arbitrary action which becomes a new link in the chain of the anti-democratic offensive steadily extending through country after country of the 'free world' from France to Pakistan and from Thailand to Guatemala. The conditions of imperialism are not so easily reproduced in a newly independent country still struggling to end the inheritance of colonial economy and complete the democratic anti-feudal revolution. The Indian masses are in movement and seek to use the newly won weapon of universal suffrage to achieve their aims. Within a few years Congress has passed from its previous 90 per cent majority to a minority position in the support of the electors, and its own ranks are divided between the reactionary propertied interests dominating its machine and the progressive democratic aspirations of wide sections of the membership and some of the leadership seeking to make a reality of the vaguely professed socialistic aims. Communism advances, with increasing sympathy and links with the left democratic sections of the Congress.

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Acid Test of Kerala

It is in this developing situation that the first Communist Ministry with a parliamentary majority in the capitalist world was returned in Kerala over two years ago. This portent has since been watched by world opinion with full recognition of the significance of this testing of the democratic professions of the representatives of property when the electoral verdict has gone against them. This was no revolutionary Government; its powers were limited; it carried out a programme of very moderate economic and social reforms. But its increasing electoral support, as shown in local and bye-elections; the lack of hope of defeating it at the polls; and the prospect of the extension of Communist or popular coalition Ministries to other States and presently all India, led the frenzied representatives of reaction to resort to direct action and lawless violence in order to provide the Congress Cabinet at the Centre with a pretext for dismissing the Communist Ministry.

Who Are the Friends and Who Are the Enemies of Democracy?

The blow against democracy in Kerala was finally dealt on July 31. The decision was taken under extreme outside pressure of reaction and by a Cabinet majority which finally over-rode the prolonged resistance and hesitation of Premier Nehru. For the first time since the establishment of the Indian Democratic Republic a Ministry with a constitutional parliamentary majority has been removed by presidential order. The consequences will be far-reaching. The offensive of reaction is already now turned against the progressive Ministers in Nehru's Cabinet, against the public sector of the Five Year Plan, against the plans for co-operative agricultural development, against the professed socialistic aims of the Congress, and even already in initial forms against Premier Nehru. Once again in India, as in France with the de Gaulle coup last year, the attack on Communism is only the starting point for the attack on all democracy. The surrenders of the petty bourgeois democratic leaders to reaction, in the name of a shared anti-communist viewpoint, only feeds the appetite of reaction and prepares their own destruction. Once again in India, as in France under de Gaulle, the Communists—that is, the working class and their allies—are revealed as the most consistent defenders of democracy, recognising in the forms of the democratic republic the most favourable path for the peaceful advance of the revolution. The propertied interests are revealed as only paying lip-service to free elections and democracy so long as conditions and a technique can be maintained to ensure that the results are in their favour.

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Reversing the Tide to the Right

This lesson goes beyond Kerala. In the modern world the links of the anti-democratic offensive are knit close throughout the 'free world' and reach to Washington and London as the main centres. Every Tory press organ has applauded the dismissal of the constitutionally elected democratic Ministry in Kerala. This lesson has its bearing also on the international significance which would attach to a defeat of Toryism by the battle of the labour movement in Britain as a reversal of the international trend to the right in the 'free world'.

Imperialism and Democracy

An examination of the real living picture of the 'free world' would thus reveal that the most, almost the only, stable 'normal' fulfilment of its supposed universal principles of free elections and Western parliamentary democracy is to be found inside the very limited range of the most highly privileged metropolitan centres of imperialism, the United States and Britain (each with their peculiar apparatus of the two-party system to insulate finance-capital against the shocks of electoral change), together with the narrow circle of their close associates, Canada, Australia, and the Scandinavian and Low countries. Beyond these favoured climes the precious flower appears to wilt and undergo strange transformations. Even in the second range of major imperialist powers such as France and Germany the supposed general 'Western' system of democratic institutions has proved extremely unstable in the modern era.

Freedom on the Basis of Slavery

At first sight it might seem strange that precisely the two Powers which enslave and exploit other nations in all parts of the world, and suck their plunder from hundreds of millions of colonial and semi-colonial slaves, should be the principal exponents at home of the system of 'free elections' and 'free democratic institutions' which they proclaim as their ensign and the spiritual purpose of their being. But there is of course no contradiction. The one is the basis of the other. The colonial plunder furnishes the reserves for the imperialist rulers to permit the 'luxury' of 'free institutions' at home—provided there is joint co-operation in maintaining the world domination (NATO, cold war, colonial wars, overseas garrisons, crushing re-armament). It was not Marx and Lenin who were the first to point out—although they were the first to analyse scientifically—this key to the special characteristics of the internal political development in the United States and Britain, and the consequent problems for the working class movement, now exemplified anew in the

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problems of the present election. It was the sharp-witted old Tory, Samuel Johnson, who pointed out long ago that 'we hear the loudest yelps for liberty from the drivers of slaves'.

British Democracy and Imperialism

Modern democracy in Britain (in the sense of universal suffrage and the constitutional sovereignty of the elected chamber) dates from the imperialist era. The plunge to manhood suffrage was not attempted till 1885. The sovereignty of the single elected chamber was not established till 1911. Partial adult suffrage was not established till 1918. Universal suffrage dates from 1928. In the early days of ascendant capitalism the working class in revolt, organised under the banner of Chartism, demanded the right to vote and annual parliaments in order to end the rule of wealth and privilege. With no less clear and simple reasoning the early rulers of capitalism publicly opposed what they declared to be the pernicious system of 'democracy' or votes for all, since this would mean that the property-less majority would swamp the propertied few and end the rights of property. The Reform Act of 1832 only enfranchised half a million. The Suffrage Act of 1867 only enfranchised two millions.

Strange Fruit

Yet in the imperialist era, when the concentration of wealth has reached an extreme never dreamed of in the Victorian era, when more and more independent small businesses have been swallowed up by the monopolies, when the majority of the nation has become in fact more completely proletarianised than ever, universal suffrage has brought about none of the panic nightmares which haunted a Macaulay or a Peel or a Bagehot. Big property, the monarchy, all that is nowadays called 'the Establishment', appears more secure, insolent, ostentatious, confident than ever. The once strident voice of republicanism is stilled. The leaders of the Labour Party warn their followers against making too much noise about even the very limited kind of nationalisation they have largely banished from their programme.

Political Miracle?

How has this apparent (in reality very unstable, very temporary) political miracle been achieved? The governing factors are closely bound up with the character of imperialism. On the one hand, the large-scale organisation of modern monopoly has made possible the concentrated monopolist control of all the channels of information or misinformation and of all expressions of opinion permitted to reach a wider public on a

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scale previously unknown. In the days of early capitalism the mass circulation press meant the Chartist press. A popular press was assumed to be the press of revolt, to be held in check by stamp duties and every restriction. Now the situation is reversed; the millionaire megaphones are miscalled the 'popular' press, while the journals of the people struggle for existence. The *Daily Herald* founded by the printers on strike to break the monopoly of the combines, becomes the organ of the combines, against which the printers on strike today demonstrate. The formerly narrow Conservative Party of the gentry is able in the imperialist era to build up a measure of mass membership, including among young people, and assume a 'democratic' mask.

Explosive Situation

At the same time, within the working class and popular movement imperialism provides the basis for an upper leading stratum to move over to co-operation with the ruling class, proclaim their path of limited reforms within the framework of the existing system to be the most practical path in contrast to revolutionary daydreams, and on this basis combat with virulent hostility all militant trends within the working class. Marx already indicated this in the nineteenth century, on the basis of the world industrial monopoly of British capitalism, when the revolutionary Chartist leadership was replaced by the blinkered and obsequious Lib-Labs who later fought with such venomous hatred the advent of the socialist pioneers. Lenin showed the full ripening of this poisonous fruit in Social Democracy in the twentieth century. This has reached an even more extreme stage since the Second World War, when socialism has extended over one-third of the world and its triumphs can no longer be denied, while the right wing leadership of the Labour Party has passed over to the front ranks of the world anti-socialist alliance led by the United States and repudiates the aims of social ownership. Yet at the same time the same conditions have led to the vast expansion of the mass organisation of the working class, and the extension of its role in the political field, even while alongside this the grip of this basically anti-working class right wing leadership has been tightened to seek to stifle every left wing aspiration and trend. This is the fantastic present artificial and potentially explosive situation which underlies the problem of the present election.

Electoral Paradox

So arises the apparent incredible paradox of present-day elections in Britain. Britain is the only country where the working class is an absolute majority of the population. Property has reached extreme con-

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centration in the hands of a few. The many have the vote with formal supreme political power to give effect through it to their will. Any former generation would have assumed that such a situation would automatically mean political power in the hands of the working class and the rapid extinction of the private ownership of wealth. Yet what has so far happened ? Over the three-quarters of a century since 1885 the left has only had two sustained runs in office (each time with a hard-core imperialist right wing on top), while Toryism has directly held office for most of the time. Only once so far, fourteen years ago, and then not under the direct impetus of the internal situation, but under the stimulus of external events, of the common victory of anti-fascist liberation, of the victories of the Red Army, of the victories of socialism in Europe, has the organised working class won an absolute parliamentary majority—only for it to be dissipated by a leadership which used it for the purposes of building the grand military anti-socialist alliance and imposing austerity to pay for it. Thereafter over each of three successive elections Toryism has advanced and the organised working class has been pressed back. The only conclusion drawn by this leadership is to retreat, retreat, retreat still further each time, throw overboard any remnant of working class politics or socialism, and vanish into an ideology increasingly indistinguishable from Toryism. The complaint is then raised ; the masses are showing ' political apathy ' in relation to this empty battle.

' Political Apathy '

The complaint of ' political apathy ' is Caliban's complaint of his reflection in the mirror. It is true that the proportion of abstention at the polls in contested seats has been steadily increasing from 16 per cent in 1950 to 17.4 per cent in 1951 and 23.2 per cent in 1955. That is a danger signal. But to blame the electors is to put the cart before the horse. What great issue is raised before them on which to be enthusiastic ? For young people today, without previous background, how much meaning has the whole rigmarole ? They are told that they are sovereign every five years to determine the fate of the nation by their cross on the ballot. Some of them may have noticed that the biggest decisions, which really determine the fate of the nation, like the first World War or the Second World War or Munich or the stationing of American atom bombers on British soil, never came before the electorate. Now, however, on the given day they are once again sovereign to choose. They can choose Mr. Takeover Bidd, the candidate of Mr. Macmillan, who advocates NATO nuclear strategy, the cold war, the American military alliance and Nazi rearmament. Or they can choose the retired trade union official or young sprig from the London School of Economics, the candidate of Mr. Gaitskell, who

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advocates NATO nuclear strategy, the cold war, the American military alliance and Nazi rearmament. Or in some cases they can choose the charming Mr. Prettyboy, just down from the university and a darling on television, who is the Liberal candidate and advocates NATO nuclear strategy, the cold war, the American military alliance and Nazi rearmament. It is true that in 17 constituencies a genuine alternative policy will be presented by the Communist candidates. But this affects less than 3 per cent of the constituencies, leaving 97 per cent without a serious alternative policy to vote for; and the monopoly control of all major forms of publicity, whether press, radio or television, can ensure that the overwhelming majority of electors will know nothing about these candidates and their policy. The magic day over, the voice of the people is declared to have spoken, and finance-capital continues its rule for the next five years. This curious process is coolly presented as the highest form of democracy, and any shortcomings are blamed on the masses.

Whither Western Europe?

Extend the picture to all Western Europe. Fourteen years ago, following the common victory over fascism won in alliance with the Soviet Union, a great surge of mass advance swept over Europe and all the world. In the resistance movements socialists, communists and their progressive allies swore to carry forward their unity after the war and rebuild their countries on a new social basis. In Eastern Europe the new regimes of people's democracy replaced the old fascist order. In France and Italy the same could have been accomplished, but the Anglo-American armies stood in the way to save the representatives of the old order and collaboration. Nevertheless Socialist-Communist Governments of working class and progressive co-operation were established in West European countries emerging from the war and entered on a far-reaching work of reconstruction. In Britain the same mass upsurge swept Labour to its first parliamentary majority.

Lesson of Fourteen Years

Where is all that advance in Europe today? In the people's democracies of Eastern Europe, under Communist leadership, whatever the dangers and problems which had to be encountered and overcome on the path, socialism has been built. But in the West? Toryism rules in Britain now for eight years. De Gaulle destroys democracy in France. Adenauer and Hitler's generals and paymasters lord it in West Germany. Clericalism rules Italy. Once again, as after the first world war, we see the price and outcome of the path of Social Democracy. First, the mass

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upsurge and the extensive social concessions from the alarmed capitalist class as the price to avoid revolution. Then the retreat as Social Democracy turns the fire on the militant workers. Then the victory of reaction. This time—and it is a measure of the more advanced situation—Communism has throughout led and continues to lead the majority of the working class in France and Italy, and thus on the basis of unity could have carried forward the advance against each attack of re-action. Even at the eleventh hour unity in France could have defeated De Gaulle. But it was Social Democracy that within a couple of years of the end of the war broke the unity in response to the demands of the American interventionists as part of the price of dollar aid, and thereby opened the gates to reaction. The united World Federation of Trade Unions, founded in the same common enthusiasm at the end of the war, was similarly split in response to American behests. Thus the way was prepared for the victory of the Right in Western Europe. The present election gives us the chance to open the offensive in Britain to reverse this victory.

Problem of the 'European Left'

Recently three leading representatives of Left Social Democracy and Radicalism, Bevan from England, Nenni from Italy and Mendès-France from France, met to discuss what had gone wrong since the war to bring about the downfall of the 'European left' and what could be done to revive it. There were, however, two major flaws in their definition of the issue as the problem of the 'European left'. In the first place, by 'Europe' they did not mean the real historic Europe as understood by all its people for centuries. They meant NATO-Europe, 'Little Europe', the rump partitioned by the United States. In other words, they assumed the American partition of Europe in the same breath in which they spoke of unity. In the second place, by the 'Left' they did not mean the real living Left which fought fascism, formed the Popular Front, or built the Resistance, the Left of which the working class is the core and leader. They meant what they called the 'non-Communist Left'—in other words, the division of the working class. But the real lesson and the real need is the opposite—to find the path of unity of the working class, of co-operation of socialists and communists and all progressive sections, for the aims of peace, democracy and the needs of the working people.

Raise the Offensive

It is in the light of this wider outlook that we need to see the burning significance of the coming election in Britain. The doubts and despondencies manifested among some sections of the left can have no place in

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this situation. We need to raise the spirit of the battle, and of confidence in the battle and in victory, among all sections of the working class and among all supporters of peace, despite the shackles and limitations imposed on the conditions of the contest by the limitations of the right wing leadership and their official policies. Certainly it would be easier if there were already a united working class with a fighting leadership, mobilising all the allies of the working class in a broad common front, isolating and challenging a Tory Party stripped of its pretences and revealed in the sight of all as the party of big business monopoly, reaction and war. But that would be to mistake the last act of the political drama for the first. It is precisely the hope and calculation of reaction that the peculiar twisted character of political development and alignment in this country, which we have had occasion to analyse, and the distortion of the character of the working class movement, consequent on the conditions of imperialism, and manifested in the policies of bi-partisanship and division of the working class—it is their hope that all this should serve to disarm, dishearten, and demobilise the working class and the representatives of the left. To surrender to these undoubtedly real difficulties in the present political situation and alignment, or to regard them as insuperable obstacles to a victorious battle, would not be a ' left ' outlook, but would be to surrender to the class enemy. The fight has to be fought, and can be fought, within the concrete conditions of the existing political situation. But to do this effectively requires, not only the will to fight, but a tactical judgment and a realist estimation of the role of the two existing formations of the political labour movement, the Labour Party and the Communist Party, in this election.

Twofold Task

First and foremost. It is essential to defeat the Tory Government at this election. It is essential to defeat the Tory Government in order to express the anger of the people against the entire policy of the past five years. It is essential to defeat the Tory Government because the Tory Party is the direct representative of the big financial monopolist interests, of the colonial robbers and militarists, of the enemies of the people. It is essential to defeat the Tory Government in order to raise internationally the banner of the new advance of the people against reaction and the anti-democratic offensive, to give strengthened confidence to the national liberation struggle in all the colonial countries and inspiration to the battle for democracy in Western Europe. It is essential to defeat the Tory Government in order to enter on a new political era of advance and experience in Britain.

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For a Labour Government

To fight for the defeat of the Tory Government in the concrete conditions of the present political situation in Britain means to fight for the return of a Labour Government. We fight for the return of a Labour Government, in spite of the character of the dominant Gaitskell leadership and the policies they represent, and with no illusions. We fight for the return of a Labour Government, because the victorious establishment of a new Labour Government with a strong majority would be the expression, however inadequate, of the determination of the organised working class to take over political leadership in this country. We fight for the return of a Labour Government because a Labour Government is based and dependent for its support on the mass organisations of the working class, and therefore compelled to give more heed to their voice and their demands, provided these are vigorously pressed, than in the case of a Tory Government. The present battle over the H-Bomb sharply illustrates this. While the official policy set for adoption at the coming Conference is still support of the NATO nuclear strategy, the rising strength of the opposition led by the Transport and General Workers within the trade union movement and the basic organisations of the Labour Party demonstrates the advance of a fight for which there could be no parallel in the ranks of Toryism or in relation to a Tory Government. We fight for the return of a Labour Government, despite the character of the existing dominant leadership and policies, because this is the necessary next stage of political advance in Britain, and only the further practical experience and testing in office of this leadership and its policies can prepare the way for the further advance that is necessary.

Battle of Policy

But the second task is no less important than the first. The fight for the defeat of Toryism and the return of a Labour Government needs to be accompanied by the fight for an alternative policy which really challenges Toryism and voices the interests of the working people and of peace, in place of the bi-partisanship on major issues voiced by the dominant Gaitskell leadership of the Labour Party. That is why the fight for Communist representation in the new parliament is of such key importance alongside the general battle to defeat Toryism and return a Labour majority. The campaign of the Communist candidates can alone voice independently and without qualification the aims and demands of the working class and supporters of peace : against the H-Bomb and the NATO nuclear strategy and Nazi nuclear strategy, or the bomber—and missile—sites in Britain ; for the freedom of all colonial peoples so as to end for ever the horrors of a Hola or a Nyasaland White Terror ; for

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drastic action against the monopolies and for extended nationalisation of a new type; for the needs of the people, increased wages and social benefits and old age pensions and the extension of the social services at the expense of armaments and the profits of the rich. These aims in fact correspond to the demands of the widest sections of the labour movement voiced through the constituency labour parties or organs of the trade unions, but which the official Labour candidates are inevitably muffled in voicing. Hence the campaign of the Communist candidates has significance, not only for the constituencies where they are fighting, but for the whole country. In every constituency the need is to press forward the campaign for such an alternative policy, and to press forward the demands on Labour candidates, many of whom will be glad to go forward so far as they can within the throttling official limits. Such a fight for an alternative policy goes forward equally before, during and after the election.

Voter's Guide

But my dear sir, the pedantic critic will point out, such a twofold strategy is full of logical contradictions. How can you talk of fighting for an alternative policy when the official bi-partisan policy has been laid down by Mr. Gaitskell and is binding on all Labour candidates? How can you call on the voters in one constituency to vote Labour to return a Labour majority, when in the neighbouring constituency you are calling on them to vote for the Communist candidate against the Tory, Labour and Liberal candidates? Certainly. But the contradictions are in the situation. They are implicit in that twisted political situation we have described within the concrete conditions of which the way forward for the aims of the working class and of peace has to be found. The contradictions are part of life; but in the end life and the struggle always finds a way through them. And to those voters in neighbouring constituencies who are puzzled about being called on to vote for the Communist candidate in the one case and for the Labour candidate in the other, we could do worse than offer the old and tried maxim: 'VOTE AS LEFT AS YOU CAN'.

August 4, 1959 R.P.D.

IT WILL BE A RARITY

We are in great need for our files of copies of the July Labour Monthly, having sold out all we could print. We should be grateful to readers who can spare us their copy when done with.

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LIGHT ON NYASALAND

D. N. Pritt, Q.C.

THE Devlin Report on Nyasaland, and the events out of which it arose, carry very many lessons.

The *Report is a remarkable document. I think I do the authors no injustice when I say that they are conservative in the broad sense, in that they accept and seek to 'conserve' what some call 'the establishment', and others call 'the whole—set up'; they certainly accept the fact of colonialism. I am sure that I do them justice when I say that they are honest men who believe that the establishment is capable of working reasonably justly, and want it to do so. The natural—perhaps unconscious—inclination of such men is to take the best view they honestly can of the establishment, and to 'give it the benefit of the doubt'; but they are plainly not capable of giving a favourable interpretation when the facts do not permit. Many passages in their Report show how they honestly lean towards a favourable interpretation of any particular incident, where people with that cynicism or insight (whichever one chooses to call it) that comes from more prolonged acquaintance with the workings of late twentieth century imperialism would form much harsher judgments. To give one example, the authors, having made up their minds that Nyasaland is governed by a despotism, describe the despotism as 'benevolent'—the 'despotism' of a kindly father and not of a tyrant. (This does not, of course, stop them recording a number of instances wherein the kindly father shot numbers of his children, even when his own laws did not permit him to do so.)

The importance for us of this attitude of the authors is obvious. (I say authors, and not author; for however clearly those who know Sir Patrick Devlin may recognise both his style, his clarity, and his judicial qualities in the document, we must not forget that the other three by no means insignificant persons have joined in its preparation and have signed it). Plainly, any condemnation or criticism which these authors, in these circumstances, expressly or impliedly make of the governments or individuals responsible for the events in Nyasaland is rendered more cogent by their general favourable 'established', approach. Their criticisms must indeed have carried conviction to everyone in this country except Messrs. Macmillan, Lennox-Boyd and Co.

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*Report of the Nyasaland Commission of Inquiry, 1959, Cmnd. 814 was dated July 16, 1959, and was signed by Mr. Justice Devlin, Sir John Ure Primrose (formerly Lord Provost of Perth), Sir Percy Wyn-Harris (formerly Governor of the Gambia), and Mr. E. T. Williams (Warden of Rhodes House, Oxford).

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When in plain words they tell one or other government (described in some cases, for reasons of protocol, quite simply as 'you') that it is a liar, it is highly convincing. And few will feel anything but indignant contempt for what I may call 'the second White Paper'* a 'Despatch by the Governor', dated five days later than the Devlin Report, and ineffectively attempting to answer it. This document is as barren of conviction as it is of any expression of regret or contrition for anything done by any of the governments concerned—even for having given in the 'first White Paper', (the 'Despatch by the Governor' of the 18th March, 1959), a false version of a letter in circumstances which, had it been used to obtain money instead of to deceive the public on a matter of vital importance, would have rendered the participants liable to prosecution for obtaining money by false pretences.

The second White Paper represents in truth the first reaction of the United Kingdom government, which obviously adopts it (even if, as many suspect, it did not write it), as part of its own case by publishing it at the time and in the circumstances in which it did so. The second reaction of the U.K. government is to be found in its defence in Parliament on July 28 which reminds any lawyer of a skilful and unscrupulous advocate at the Old Bailey picking out the few redeeming points in the evidence against an obviously guilty recidivist, making the best gingerbread facade he can out of them, and hoping that the prosecution will not kick the gingerbread hard enough to make it collapse. It is typical of imperialist stupidity and recklessness in this 'last stage' that they did not pause to consider what infinite harm this attitude would cause to them with African public opinion.

So much for the Report. The resulting lessons are far more important, but I do not apologise for giving so much consideration to the Report, since the lessons cannot be understood without that consideration. The lessons are not, of course, lessons which the Reporters set out to give us. It was not their function to do anything of the sort, and they may not agree with the inferences I draw; but in my view the lessons I will now develop cannot but be drawn from the Report and from—to quote its terms of reference—'the recent disturbances in Nyasaland and the events leading up to them.'

The lesson which I take first is this: that no one should hereafter ever believe anything that either the U.K. government or any of its colonial governments says. Some of the individuals concerned may be honest men at home; they may not even beat their wives. But in their public

*Nyasaland: Despatch by the Governor relating to the Report of The Nyasaland Commission of Inquiry, 1959, Cmnd. 815.

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activities, which alone concern us, they are liars. They lie whenever they think that they can, by lying, convince us of something that is not true, divert our attention from what they are doing, or persuade us to accept the unacceptable policies which they seek to carry through in the interests of their own class. They lie to everyone, in every field ; they lie to the Africans, to the Europeans, and to Parliament ; in a sense, they lie to themselves. This is well-known already to many of us. Many others of us have been slowly and reluctantly driven towards knowledge of it ; now, surely, with these examples before us, we must all accept it as axiomatic. If, for example, the Foreign Office puts some blame on Adenauer or Herter for some inexcusable crime against peace, you must not give the slightest credence to the suggestion that the poor dear British Government is not to blame, for it will be lying if it suits it. And, of course, one does not need to be told today that, if a colonial government tells you that eleven men have died *after* drinking water, this explanation does not exclude the possibility that they died *'after' and because* they were beaten to death. (Nor is it safe even to assume the truth of the exact opposite of what they say ; they are even too unreliable for that. All you can do is to form a judgment from such solid facts as you can find, uninfluenced by anything they tell you).

The second lesson, pretty important too, is : colonial governments are usually extremely badly informed. Their primary source of information is that of professional or semi-professional informers, whom all lawyers —and most other people—know to be as unreliable as any other political traitor or prostitute. Their stories, wholly imaginary or just thoroughly exaggerated, make their way upwards through all sorts of Special Branch reports (charitably described in the Report as 'not always reliable') into 'monthly intelligence reports', and in their final form are probably little better than when they started—for no building is much good if the foundations are rotten. They fall into the well-known category of 'reliable sources', described to me 44 years ago, when I was a humble official of M.I.6, by my chief (an honest conservative) as 'Any source too unreliable to be disclosed'.

It follows that, most of the time, vital decisions—'vital' partly because they tend to lead to many Africans, but no Europeans, being shot dead—are taken by responsible officials about as ignorant of the true facts as an American Senator forming a conclusion about a 'Commie' state. The appalling additional dangers involved in despotic government or misgovernment (bad enough anyhow) being based on mis-information do not require elaboration. (And if it be said that the real explanation of the fantastic lies told about the 'Murder Plot' might be that the people putting out the story were just thoroughly misinformed, the answer is that

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semi-defence may well be available in some cases, but is not so in this particular case, since this Report makes it clear that some people very high up were telling this story at a time when they must have known that there was virtually no truth in it).

The third lesson is that the whole colonial system is very near indeed to its final end. This, again, is something which many of us know already; but it is vital that all of us should be convinced of it, and should guide our political thoughts, utterances, and actions upon it. That it is the truth can hardly be doubted ; today, less than fifteen years after the start of the great sweep of ' grants ' of colonial political independence, affecting over half the world in terms of population, one territory after another in Africa itself is being formally liberated from European domination ; and it is plain that colonial rule cannot be prolonged either by the savage civil war, the police brutality, the ' enforcement of law and order ' coupled with denial of most of the basic civil rights, or the lying and swindling, that are being applied in various ways and degrees in South Africa, the Rhodesias, Algeria, and most of the rest of Africa. That it could be prolonged in a modified form, for a short time, by wholesale concessions, need not be studied, for the surviving colonial governments are much too frightened to follow any such course. They ' hold on ' even more desperately, like one who has hold of a hungry tiger by the tail ; they see for the most part no alternative to savage repression ; and they make grudging concession, ' too little and too late ', only when public opinion in the U.K. or the colony forces them to it. (And today, indeed, there is in each territory an added reluctance to give way even to the strongest pressure, for fear that, if their territory ' goes ', all the surrounding territories will be putting on *their* shoes all the sooner).

The fourth lesson is that neither the outlook nor the conduct of colonialist rulers changes one iota, save in so far as public pressure changes the conduct—not of course the outlook. They are still thinking and talking of Africans not being ' mature ', whilst they continue their efforts to ensure that they shall have little chance to ripen ; they are still talking of African ' mental inferiority ' when they have nothing better than Lennox-Boyds and Welenskies to oppose to subtle and far-seeing intelligences like those of Julius Nyerere and Tom Mboya, to say nothing of Dr. Banda. They are still pursuing the course—as pointed out in the Report—of deciding what is best for the Africans (meaning thereby, of course, what is best for the rulers of the Africans, e.g., Federation), and then insisting on carrying through what they have thus decided, regardless of African opposition. They still seek to suppress every organised African political party which is not completely subservient. They still seek to think of opposition to government policy as something to be dealt

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with by the magistrate's court and the sten gun (with the District Commissioner sitting as magistrate and the District Commission calling in the troops who have the stens). And, having thus eliminated every normal peacable outlet of African opinion or resentment, and forced Africans to choose between violence and the sort of abject surrender which they themselves adopt when they confront the State Department in Washington, they still treat every breach of the peace as something to be restrained by the use, legal or illegal, of lethal weapons. To them, all violence, whatever the provocation, is inexcusable unless carried out in uniform by Whites or by Africans hired by whites, when it becomes something to be commemorated by a medal.

They still deprive colonial peoples, in substance and often in form, of all the normal rights of adult citizens—freedom of speech, writing, printing, organisation, and meeting, freedom from indefinite imprisonment without charge or trial (politely called detention, and described by Lennox-Boyd in the Hola massacre debate of July 27 as 'a desperate remedy for a deperate situation'—an admission, for those who knew the facts, that most of our colonies are 'in desperate situations' directly caused by colonial rule). They still—the Report tells us—describe the attitude of missionaries who are opposed to Government measures, and who merely make their opposition known, as 'very near subversion'; in one case they even warned a Church of Scotland missionary who was guilty of being visited by a *released* detainee that if he did that sort of thing he might get into trouble and even be offending against the Emergency Regulations 'by causing doubt to be cast on the work of the security forces or the police'. As the Report puts it, 'We think that the Government's attitude, consciously or unconsciously, was based on the assumption that every right-minded African ought to know that what was done in the name of the Governor or the Boma* must be right, and that to resist it must be wrong'.

And it is at any rate a tribute to the vitality of British hypocrisy that this sort of rule is covered by the boasts of 'British freedom', and put forward as a shining example of the 'free world'. It is odd, in the face of all this, that they have the hardihood to resent the Report description of Nyasaland as 'a police state'. One wonders at what point, for them, a state in which no one can, save at a terrible price, express any opposition to the government, and in which no one has any of the civil rights which are 'a.b.c.' in the U.K., could get bad enough to be called a police state! The truth is that they never change, except in the sense that they decay

*The Boma is, literally, the residence and offices of the District Commissioner. In effect 'the Governor or the Boma' means the central government of the colony or the government of the District.

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a little more ; and that it is for us, Africans and Europeans, to change them.

I am not sure whether I should describe as one more lesson, or treat as a conclusion to be drawn from all these lessons, the plain inference that there is no depth of infamy in the management of colonies which suffices to make the Prime Minister dismiss a colonial governor or a secretary of state, or to lead such officials to retire of their own motion. The net effect of this is to rob Tory politicians of the last vestige of prestige or 'face', and incidentally to show that our twentieth century parliamentary democracy, in which a cabinet appointed by the Prime Minister and dismissible by him decides, without any consultation with parliament, what shall be done, and then 'submits' that decision 'to the judgment of the House' by calling for a vote, putting the whips on, and thus in effect informing every Government member that he will commit political suicide if by his vote he attempts to form any part of the 'judgment of the House' other than that decided in advance by the Government.

It must be difficult for those who have not had the advantage of being brought up as British democrats to realise that most people in Britain take as a matter of course the fact that, after this remarkably moderate and convincing Report had been written, the whole Tory party in the House of Commons went into the lobby to record their condemnation of those parts of the Report the Cabinet did not like, and their acceptance of those parts it did like. Not many of them, perhaps, had studied it carefully ; all those that did do so must have known that in voting the way they did they were not merely surrendering their judgment, but were doing something that, in any national assembly in which members were expected to vote according to their true opinion, would be the worst kind of mental treason. The truth is that, unless some radical reform of Parliament is reached in the near future, the parliamentary system will go the way of the colonial system. Its operation is at the present stage rendered far worse than it might be by the fact that the Tories can rely on the Labour Party never to challenge anything fundamental, such as the colonial system or the imposition of Federation on the bitterly hostile inhabitants of Nyasaland, but to confine its parliamentary struggle within the 'rules of the game' inherited in substance from the nineteenth century.

What are the final lessons that we must draw for ourselves from all this ? I think they are two. The first, that Toryism and colonialism, as such, must be fought all the time, as a matter of principle, not just criticised when they break into bursts of their inevitable savagery ; and the second, that—as pointed out already in *Labour Monthly*—the British

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people now need, and must urgently secure, a better weapon against the Tories, and for the transition to Socialism, than the Labour Party has so far proved itself to be. For it is not a matter ahead of us of any and every Labour Government, not a mere swopping of Front Benches ; Mr. Frank Cousins came nearer to it this summer when he said : ' The most important thing in our lives is to elect a Labour Government that is determined to carry out socialist principles.'

LABOUR MONTHLY TWENTY FIVE YEARS AGO

TRADE UNIONS DEMAND ACTION

A rising demand for action is developing throughout the trade union movement, finding sharp expression in the decisions of the recent trade union conferences on the question of wages and hours, and of the fight against war and fascism. The wages movement is receiving considerable stimulation from the temporary improvement in production which results in a lessening pressure of unemployment and the feeling that the workers have now a better opportunity to get concessions. The propaganda of the National Government about prosperity is also stimulating the movement for wage increases, but the principal stimulus is the fact that the capitalist offensive during the past years has been driven forward not only on direct wage rates, but also on every form of earnings and working conditions to such a degree that the tension in the factories is reaching breaking point.

(John A. Mahon in **The Trades Union Congress and the United Front,** September, 1934.)

PAST CONTENTS

MAY : *Honour to Whom Honour* (R.P.D.) ; *A Significant Congress* (John Gollan) ; *The Tibetan Serf-Owners' Rebellion* (Alan Winnington) ; *Lancashire Fights Back* (Harold Dickinson) ; *Not Recognised* (Ben Wilson) ; *Is There a Future in Mining ?* (Joe Whelan) ; *Crisis in Transport* (R. H. Smillie) ; *Trade Unions Under Fire* (O. H. Parsons) ; *The Artist's One World* (John Berger). BOOK REVIEWS : *People's Capitalism* (J. M. Budish) ; James Harvey.

JUNE : *Propaganda Fall-Out* (R. Page Arnot) ; *Geneva and the People* (Nora Jeffery) ; *Strong Voices for Peace* (Joan Maynard, J.P.) ; *We Fight Pit Closures* (J. B. Craig) ; *Drawing : Liverpool Strike 1911* ; *The Right to Work Defended* (Edmund Frow) ; *The Wage Rise That Wasn't* (Dave Bowman) ; *Fight Back* (Peter Kerrigan) ; *Tibet and Premier Nehru* (Alan Winnington) ; *Every Inch a Fighter !* ; *' Too Many Young People '* ; (Gerry Pocock) ; *Youth and Skill* (' Tyneside Apprentice '). BOOK REVIEWS : *World Without War* (J. D. Bernal), Dr. E. H. S. Burhop.

JULY : *Labour and the Bomb* (R.P.D.) ; *Foreign Ministers at Geneva* (Quaestor) ; *An Inside Story* (D. N. Pritt, Q.C.) ; *Drawing : Bloody Sunday, 1887* ; *Nato with Dungarees On* (J. Jarvie) ; *What the Shareholders Cost Us* (N. Temple) ; *Unity on the Rails* (J. Oldbury) ; *The Kirk in Scotland and Nyasaland* (William Gallacher). BOOK REVIEWS : *Ballet School of the Bolshoi Theatre*

AUGUST : *Labour's Great Debate* (R.P.D.) ; *The Brink of Peace ?* (Ivor Montagu) ; *End This Hell in Africa* (Jack Woddis) ; *The Road to Wapping Steps* (Councillor Solly Kaye) ; *A New Town's Old, Old Story* (Joe Sack) ; *The Shop Steward's Job* (D. Tocher) ; *The Arab World and Us* (N. S. Khrushchov) ; *The Morning After the ' Tonight ' Before* (D. H. Calcutt) ; *Handel at Halle* (Alan Bush) ; *The Artist's World Outlook* (N. A. Dobrolyubov) ; BOOK REVIEWS : *C'Etait Ainsi* (F. Grenier), D. N. Pritt, Q.C. ; *Soviet Medicine* : *The Fight Against Mental Diseases* (L. Rokhlin), L. Crome.

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A PRINTER SPEAKS TO MINERS

Robert Willis

We are pleased to print excerpts from the speech, quite inadequately reported in the press, made to the National Union of Mineworkers' annual conference on July 7, by Robert Willis (London Typographical Society), as fraternal delegate from the Trades Union Congress of whose General Council he is chairman.—Ed., L.M.

(He recalled that ninety years before the Fife miners had 'stayed down the pits in order to secure an eight-hour day. It is somewhat remarkable that in 1959, ninety years later, you have on your platform a trade union representative who is at this moment engaged in a struggle for the same eight-hour day'. He went on to recount the case for the printers in the dispute, then in its third week.)

THERE are hundreds of thousands of workers in the Printing Industry who have been locked out. If they have not been locked out, then some of them have come out on strike because their pals were locked out. But locked out or on strike, they are out, and they are out in support of a principle for which I think every worker in the Trade Union movement of this country supports and, indeed, would fight for, a shorter working week in these modern days. *(Hear, hear).*

May I again on that point make this statement? There is a lot of talk about the fabulous wages that printers secure. I have heard that kind of talk about coalminers, too, and we know just how true it is and how easily a comparatively few people, perhaps because of their skill and craft, who earn comparatively high wages, can be taken as representative of the entire body, but the minimum wage for highly skilled craftsmen in London is £11 a week. If that is the wage for highly skilled craftsmen, you will readily understand that £9 and even less is the wage enjoyed by many people who could not come within the category of skilled craftsmen. It is true, with overtime and earnings of that character, it has been increased, but I would say that the average earnings of printers in this country are nearer £12 10s. 0d. than the £30 and £40 which is so often referred to in the national press.

Now, the issue unfortunately is rapidly becoming not a question of a 40-hour week and a 10 per cent increase in wages for a few printers; it is rapidly becoming a matter of how soon can some workers be forced into an arbitration that they do not want. On that point we are firm, not out of any stubbornness, but because we feel that we are expressing the views of many other workers in many other Unions when we say we have no confidence in arbitration, we have no trust in it at all, and if that is the

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MINERS' WIVES

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During a lockout in 1875, the colliers' wives are summoned to a mass meeting in the mining village of Boldon, Co. Durham.

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case, the responsibility must lie at the door of a Government that has slashed away any confidence that the workers might have in conciliation and arbitration procedure so far as the Government is .concerned *(Applause).*

Yet we find that the employers, the Government, the national papers, are all taking up the same old parrot cry, ' Arbitration or nothing ', despite the insistence of the Unions that that is something which we will not tolerate under any circumstances. Now, I do not want you to think from that, again, we are being stubborn, inflexible and unreasonable. Keeping in time with modern events, we have gone to the poor, impoverished employers, and we have told them we will take the 3½ hours off our working week on the never-never principle, excepting that the never-never must end within three years. In short, we have told them we would accept the reduction in hours by instalments spread over a three years period of stability, but even that offer has been completely ignored and the answer is that the industry cannot afford it.

May I say even again on that point that we, as an industry, have done everything we can to secure the improvements of the Trades Union Congress for the period of stability in our industry. We have had a five years' stabilisation from 1950 to 1955. We then stabilised for three. We are now again offering to stabilise, and when you consider that any award that we might get means no further increases or demands for a period of three years, then even 10 per cent increase in wages on an £11 minimum is not asking a great deal from a comparatively wealthy industry.

But as I have already said, if arbitration is viewed with suspicion, the Government has only itself to blame. We are convinced—we are convinced from experience—that in the arbitration courts today, instead of the merits of a claim being considered and adjudicated upon, the merits are ignored and the claim is set against the national economy and the Government's programme, and if that is the case, what hope can workers have of justice and of a fair deal when the merits are ignored and only the Government's plans and the national economy are considered ? The Minister, in any event, does not inspire us with any confidence. In my view, he is the embodiment of negation. For him there is only one side to a question, and it is not ours, and under his guidance the Ministry of Labour has rapidly become a headquarters for inactivity. We feel that even the T.U.C. suggestions that were put up to try and get the sides together are now being taken up by the Government, and the idea of an independent chairman is only a manner and way of disguising the arbitration which the Government seeks to enforce upon us.

I would charge the employers with deliberately extending this dispute, and extending it unnecessarily. Only this morning's papers indicate that

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the National Union of Journalists, an inoffensive body of people who would do no harm to anybody—well, it is always the sub-editor who puts the headlines on !—but even the National Union of Journalists, who have merely carried out their Trade Union duty by refusing to handle black copy, are being summarily dismissed from their places by various employers up and down the country, and we have got some views to collect first before we could even consider any further terms of negotiation with the employers in this matter.

Again, there is no need for the big national newspapers to close down. I am sickened by the hypocrisy of the tears of the national papers about the way in which you will be deprived of your right to democratic expression of opinion, because those papers have a heavy interest in the printing ink manufacturers who are causing that particular close down. The *Mail*, the *Daily Mirror* and *The Times*—what an association !—have got 30,000 shares in one of the big printing ink manufacturers ; Beaverbrook and his *Express* have a 50 per cent controlling interest in another manufacturer that supplies them with their ink ; and even Odhams Press —and one has to say ' Odhams ' with bated breath—but even Odhams Press has a firm that does practically nothing else but supply ink to Odhams, and they have two of their directors sitting on the board and they hold shares in that company. You cannot tell me that if newspaper proprietors have got these interests in the printing ink manufacturers, that they could do nothing at all but sit back and weep when they find that their papers may close down. One cannot avoid the feeling that this is a deliberate attempt to spread the dispute ; it is a deliberate attempt to embroil other people in it ; it is a deliberate attempt to say ' We cannot permit any Trade Union to secure a 40-hour week ' and to lift what is really an ordinary industrial struggle out of the context of its industry and put it on a national plane as a fight for a 40-hour week throughout the country. If the action of these people is to attempt to weaken us financially by forcing more and more people on to our books, then all I can say is they will fail, and they will fail dismally.

(After discussing the grave situation in the mining industry, pit closures and a national fuel policy, he turned finally to the ' factor that supersedes any union conference ', which was ' the grave danger in which we are placed today with the threat of nuclear war '.)

I would just like to say that this terrible menace must be taken up, must be dealt with and must be dealt with rapidly, and the movement must play a full part in this. Certainly these horrible tests must not only be stopped now—and they have been by a truce of a kind ; they must be stopped permanently, if possible, because of the poisoning of the atmosphere which is affected by every test that takes place. We read this

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morning that even on the wings of an aeroplane there are now deposits of strontium 90, and I only hope in washing those deposits away they are a bit careful where the water is running to after they have done the washing.

But I would say this. If this generation wishes to kill and mutilate itself, well then that is all right, because it will be this generation that would suffer, but we have no right morally or in any other way to injure and to mutilate generations yet unborn. There is General de Gaulle filled with ambition now to start having his own little bomb and to listen to the explosion when it goes off. One could almost hope he would be close enough to it when it does. But we know that if France gets it, West Germany will want it. If West Germany has it, can you in conscience deny East Germany the right? Where does this thing stop, with nation after nation making their bombs, big or small, testing them, poisoning and polluting the very atmosphere which we breathe, and we have got to face the fact here, too, that it is no good talking in terms of summit talks or general disarmament with the Soviet Union playing a full part if, at the same time, you are increasing the fears that exist in the world by enlarging the area of explosion.

I am convinced, and I think I could say here that the T.U.C. is convinced, that Russia will never be able to settle down to talks while it considers or while it fears that Germany as a nation will be able to throw its weight on to one particular side. It is equally true we could not settle down to talks if we thought Germany was going to throw its weight on to the other side, and if that is the case it might be better in the long run if Germany had no weight to throw on either side.

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PRINTERS, POLICE & PICKETING

Fred Gannaway

PRINTWORKERS will need to give serious consideration to the events and lessons in the dispute recently ended. We must give thoughtful attention to the policy, leadership and tactics in a dispute which has been a gold mine of experience. The industry has received a severe shake-up and it will never be quite the same again.

Right from the start one particular side of the dispute which received some publicity was the attitude and actions of the police force. To most of the lads this was their first experience of lock-out or strike. They had the usual illusions about the policeman: they had a lot to learn and learn it quickly. Perhaps their role can be seen most clearly in the fight against the 'black' *T.V. Times*.

On the very day that the great gravure presses rolled to a stop at the Sun Printers in Watford, the printing town just outside London, news was received from an official source by the members of the National Society of Operative Printers and Assistants (NATSOPA) in Watford that the *T.V. Times* was to be printed in the London suburb of Kilburn. So what? What to do? Clearly something had to be done. This was bread and butter to the lads at the 'Sun'. It was agreed to get pickets out to Kilburn on the Monday morning. The lads in London, too, saw the issue as a challenge to NATSOPA, to print trade unionism and the outcome of the dispute. So first thing on Monday morning, June 22, pickets from Watford arrived at the *Kilburn Times and Willesden Chronicle* office on what was probably the first mass picket of the dispute—certainly the first successful one. Too late to do anything about a lorry of paper which was being unloaded when we arrived, we had to act, and act we did. A faithful old Morris 8 found itself parked in the gates, a position which two policemen who had arrived within a matter of minutes, said amounted to obstruction. So obligingly it was removed.

Then started a particular pattern of police patter and performance which repeated itself all through the dispute. First the policemen were very matey, wanted to know about the dispute, told us about their long hours and poor pay, etc., they made a laugh and a joke—until the interests of the print owners seemed threatened in any particular way. Then they went vigorously into action—and over the top if necessary. On the sympathy angle; the Inspector who had arrived on the scene at Kilburn was so sympathetic that he started advising us how to organise our picketing. He had seen some; and what you had to do was to have a couple of official pickets—with badges you know—draw up a rota and let

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these do the job. The rest of us could take it easy, couldn't we, and leave it to them. We reciprocated this matey-ness and organised our official pickets ; but we didn't leave it to them—a first very important lesson. We watched out for lorries bringing paper before they got to the gates. Our first taste of victory was when we successfully persuaded one to get in touch with his steward ; he turned back with his load. By now the lads from the Fleet Street national newspapers and Central London print-shops had arrived. One of them not only had the official picket badges but copies of what became a weapon in our struggle, the Labour Research Department threepenny pamphlet on Picketing. Some of us absorbed the facts and spirit of the pamphlet so well that we became experts at arguing, often with success, with policemen from constables to Superintendents, defending our legal rights, inch by inch. The police got to know this little pamphlet too, as they told us more than once.

With our numbers now somewhere near 100 we continued with the official pickets. But we also paraded the side and main streets to keep a watchful eye on the gate, despite the effort of the police to keep us moving and to disperse us. Our lads had their experience of the matey ones, pushing and prodding us. When later a blackleg insisted on taking his lorry into the 'Black' shop these same mates prevented us from speaking to him and conducted him inside. What chagrin they must have felt as our cheers rang out to drivers who turned away with loads.

We now had our first experience of the police acting as mouthpiece for the bosses. An inspector approached our spokesman and said that the firm was ceasing to run the *T.V. Times* and would not print any more, therefore we should finish our picketing. We said that we would have to hear this firsthand, direct from the management of the firm. So the policeman ushered our representatives inside the office. Here they met responsible members of the firm who gave firm assurances. These were accepted and reported back to the pickets. Three cheers for 'Victory' rang out ; the first round against the black 'Martelly' Times was won.*

Next day in Watford we were informed that this *T.V. Times* was now going to the *Kent Messenger* at Maidstone, another leg of the Martell set-up. Action was needed ; act we did. What was later to be called the 'Flying Squad' of pickets was developing. Forty pickets with cars assembled next morning at 7 a.m. for Maidstone in Kent including a young girl paperworker. Some of us did not get home for two days.

*Mr. Edward Martell, formerly a Liberal member of the London County Council, some years back announced the establishments of a 'Free Press', to employ only workers who would pledge themselves never to take part in a strike. This he proposed to put at the disposal of any 'strike-bound' employers. During the London Bus Strike of 1958 he claimed that his organisation had successfully run vehicles over some of the bus routes. His organisation was again in the news during the recent printing dispute.

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We had not arrived long before the London lads also started to appear on the scene, some of them straight from a night on their paper. These, too, travelled in cars, vans and motor-bikes. Apart from actual picketing on the same pattern as at Kilburn and also demonstrating to the local people we had to get as much information as possible. We soon discovered that with the aid of the Martell brains the firm had made a number of extraordinary arrangements after the Trade Union members had been locked out on the Friday. The very long windows on the works side of the building had all been screened with brown paper; the key staff were to sleep on the premises; locks were changed. There were other plans, too, as we were to discover.

We continued with picketing and public activity all day—again, all very 'matey', whilst the public were in sight: we succeeded in turning paper back, and moreover no loads came out of the building. Our intelligence service advised that this might be attempted in the late evening. So we had a march with slogan-shouting around the side road by the main gate. About 11 p.m. the police thought that we were disturbing the peace, so we quietened down—but remained on the alert. This lasted until 1 a.m., during which time there was a large force of police present. (Martell himself arrived, although we did not know him then.)

Then it happened. Suddenly two Black Marias drove into the street and immediately belched their contents of another large contingent of cops. At that moment the police inspector who had manned the gate continuously signalled, three bangs with his foot on the gate. It immediately opened and the lorry carrying its black load roared out at a dangerous speed, whilst the now powerful force of police knocked everybody back off the road, up against the street walls. The lorry raced off up the one-way street, against the traffic signs, escorted by a police-van.*

This plan and action (for which the superintendent was complimented in the House of Commons by a Tory M.P.) could not have succeeded had there not been the closest liaison between the police, the bosses of the *Kent Messenger*, and the Martell set-up. Not only liaison in action, but what is so much more peculiar with a public body like the police, liaison obviously in planning the action. Co-ordination of the time for the arrival of the police reinforcements and the lorry's 'dash for freedom'; police assistance in allowing lorry and policevan to tear off in the wrong direction of a one-way street; and here is one more example of organisation between these new bed-fellows. A printworker's car which

*Several picketers have been 'booked' by the police for parking their cars, or for turning in a one-way street. The police were asked why they did not take the same action against an 'enemy car', which had been standing, strategically placed, for some hours. They had 'no statement to make'.

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was proceeding towards London behind the runaway lorry was twice stopped by the police to check the licence, in the middle of the night.

This was not all, as was later revealed by a trade union official who had been sent by his general secretary to protest to the police at their action. The same superintendent obligingly acted as spokesman for the *Kent Messenger* bosses in conveying their improved plan for picketing. The firm, he explained, were prepared to allow two official pickets to go into their office to interview drivers of lorries ; this would constitute our picketing and anything else would be unnecessary ! The trade union official gave him his answer : that he would go inside these premises only to discuss the printers' terms of the 40-hour week and 10 per cent.

It took two days of determined action at Maidstone, and also the now famous Battle of Kingsway outside the periodical's London associates in which 1,000 printers clashed with the police. Then the *T.V. Times* caved in and returned from the fray to a print shop which was not involved in the dispute—white at last. All over the country we have seen the same as in the story of the *T.V. Times :* the clear role of the police acting in the interests of the bosses, strike-breakers and blacklegs. But all over the country printworkers have seen, been involved in and become incensed at all the smooth patter about police neutrality. They have seen the real role of the police in a labour dispute ; official union deputations have had to visit the Home Secretary, and questions asked in Parliament. The printworkers have seen all this and how to fight back. Yes, the lessons are plain, and experience is a good teacher.

THE BOLD GENDARMES

Along the streets the soldiers rode
  Dispensing sabre cuts,
The bobbies drew their truncheons out
  And bashed in people's nuts ;
And when perchance they happ'd to meet
  A fellow all alone,
They knocked him down, then run him in
  To save him walking home.
And twenty bob or fourteen days, he
  Got, got, got,
The beaks had sworn that they would make it
  Hot, hot, hot ;
For rows they can't abide,
  Excepting on their side,
And justice for the working man is
  Rot, rot, rot.

From **Black Friday in Bristol,** December 23, 1892.

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TWENTY YEARS AFTER

Quaestor

TWENTY years ago saw the beginning of the 1939-1945 war. Its cause and origins, as given in various publications, were the subject of much discussion and controversy. New documents that have since become available confirm the analyses made by the Communists then and throw a most important light on the negotiations that took place in the summer of 1939.

Between 1950 and 1954 there were published no less than five stout volumes of British diplomatic documents bearing on that period *(Documents on British Foreign Policy,* Third Series, volumes iii-vii). The Soviet journal *International Affairs,* in its issues for February and March, 1959, published the Soviet minutes of the Moscow conversations between the British, French and Soviet missions in August, 1939. A number of Memoirs and other works, revealing still more what happened in that year, have appeared.

These have established beyond any doubt the following facts :

As late as January, 1939, the British and French Governments were still under the impression that Hitler was shortly going for the Ukraine, and they did not dream then of interfering with him. Only when it was indicated that Hitler, on the contrary, might begin by an attack westward did they decide ' to accelerate as far as possible the preparation of their defensive and counter-offensive measures ' (Lord Halifax, then Foreign Secretary, on January 24, 1939).

After Hitler seized Czechoslovakia on March 15 that year, the British Government approached the U.S.S.R. about the menace of aggression for the first time. But for two and a half months all the British (and French) proposals were designed so as to commit the U.S.S.R. to war if Germany decided to attack Poland or Rumania (then allies of France)—but to leave the British and French Governments free of all obligations if Germany decided to attack the U.S.S.R. *with the help* of Poland and Rumania (who already had an agreement for military co-operation against the U.S.S.R.), or through the Baltic States. When Litvinov, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, pointed this out to the British Ambassador, Sir William Seeds, on March 18, 1939, the latter could only mumble something about the British Government deciding its action ' later '.

On May 27, 1939, the British and French Governments at last stopped for a time ' acting dumb '—as though they did not understand what the U.S.S.R. was getting at when it objected to such an arrangement—and

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agreed in principle on a triple alliance. But during the following two months they dragged out negotiations over the most obvious points in such a way that it became clear that they had no serious intentions at all. In the words of William Strang, a senior Foreign Office official at the talks (July 20, 1939):

> The fact that we have raised difficulty after difficulty at points which seem to them inessential has created an impression that we may not be seriously seeking an agreement.

This particularly applied to the question of the Baltic States, then capitalist countries ruled by Fascist or military dictatorships. The Soviet Union wanted guarantees against German 'indirect aggression' there, such as had been practised elsewhere, i.e. against engineered changes of government policy in these countries which would open the door for a German attack on the U.S.S.R. through their territory. As Strang wrote in the letter just quoted:

> If we wish to understand how they feel about the Baltic States we have only to imagine what our own attitude would be to the establishment of German influence over Holland or Belgium.

Nevertheless the British and French Governments went on to the last sanctimoniously asserting that they could not 'impose' guarantees on the Baltic States—carefully wrapping in secrecy the fact that *between themselves*, and without telling the Dutch, Swiss and Danish Governments, they had decided to intervene if Holland, Switzerland or Denmark were attacked by Germany (though they did tell Colonel Beck, the pro-Hitler Polish Foreign Minister, all about it on April 4, 1939).

Thus everything was done to keep the way clear for German imperialist aggression—provided only that it was against the U.S.S.R.—while talks went on with the Soviet Government for five months for co-operation to stop aggression. And the Fascist aggressors realised what was happening. Hitler was able without hindrance to seize Memel from Lithuania on March 23; Mussolini invaded Albania on April 7; Hitler denounced his Naval Pact with Britain and his treaty of friendship with Poland (demanding the handing over to him of the Free State of Dantzig) on April 28; and troops began to concentrate around the Polish border, reaching nearly two millions by the second week in August.

The whole process reached its climax in the farcical composition (second-line officers), method of transport (slow cargo-boat), and above all secret instructions given to the British Military Mission sent at the beginning of August, 1939, to Moscow, nominally to discuss how to stop all this. Outwardly the Tory Government of the day was full of enthusiasm for co-operation with the U.S.S.R. to preserve peace and for supplementing the political agreement for a three power pact, all but

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complete, with a military convention. Secretly it told its mission : ' Until such time as the political agreement is concluded the Delegation should go very slowly with the conversations . . . The British Government is unwilling to enter into any detailed commitments which are likely to tie our hands in all circumstances. Endeavours should therefore be made to confine the military agreement to the broadest possible terms . . .', and so forth.

So monstrous were these instructions that the British Ambassador himself, on August 13, 1939, was moved to protest to Halifax—a rare occurrence :

> Under such conditions I consider that the military talks are likely to produce no result other than arousing once again Russian fears that we are not in earnest, and are not trying to conclude a definite agreement.

He need not have said ' fears '. After the dragging out of the diplomatic talks from March to July—and after the way in 1938 that the British and French Governments had deliberately handed over Czechoslovakia, trussed hand and foot, to Hitler, rather than even threaten to defend her in unison with the Soviet Union, which had offered to do so—the Russians did not ' fear ' ; they knew. And when the British and French Governments through their missions told the Soviet Government that they were unfortunately unable to force Poland to accept military assistance from the U.S.S.R.—although Poland was helpless without such support—the Russians were confirmed in their knowledge. The Western Governments seemed to want war over Poland ; very well, they could get on with it.

The British and French Governments of 1939 knew that fighting alone against Germany, Poland was bound to go under. In the words of the head of the British Military Mission himself : ' If Poland and Rumania do not ask for Soviet help, they will soon become German provinces '. But that did not worry the British and French Governments—provided the Soviet forces were ' lined up on their frontier ' (actual words used in the military talks) when the Germans, triumphant after destroying the Polish Army, arrived there. You do not require a vivid imagination to realise what the Western Governments were hoping would then happen.

Thus from beginning to end the policy of the British and French Governments, in the negotiations twenty years ago, was to keep the road clear for German imperialist aggression eastwards. And for this purpose no double-dealing was too sordid, no diplomatic trickery and sabotage too dirty, and no deception of their own public opinion too contemptible —for day in, day out, during those months from March to August, 1939, their Foreign Offices were feeding the newspapers with stories about the ' Grand Alliance ' with Russia being just round the corner.

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Is it right to recall these events today? Indeed it is. For in spite of the world balance of forces having changed, two essential features of international politics are similar to those existing in 1939; and thereby a peril to world peace has been built up which it will take all the efforts of the peoples, and particularly of the British working class, to pull down.

The world balance of forces has been changed by (i) the Soviet Union having emerged victorious from the second world war and reaching an unassailable height of economic, political, military and moral strength; (ii) the vast Chinese People's Republic and smaller People's Democracies in Asia, and the People's Democracies in Poland, Czechoslovakia and other countries of Europe, joining the Soviet Union in a Socialist alliance; (iii) the first State in German history free from landlords and capitalists coming into existence in the German Democratic Republic. These changes make it even more risky to attack the Soviet Union than twenty years ago.

But the features similar to those existing in 1939 are, first, the re-creation, for the *second* time, with the benevolent assistance of American and British imperialism, of a full-blooded imperialist State in West Germany, openly thirsting for revenge and increasingly well-armed; and, secondly, the rebirth for the *second* time among the imperialists of Britain and America of the fatal illusion that (with the help of NATO) they can guarantee a new German aggression 'going off eastwards'. For the sake of this dream of a one-way gun in West Germany, they have sacrificed chance after chance of an amicable settlement on disputed international questions with the U.S.S.R. The recent Geneva Conference of Foreign Ministers, largely stultified by the almost public acceptance of Adenauer's 'no compromise' demands, is the latest example.

How do we know that the illusion exists? Because there is direct evidence of it both in Britain and the U.S.A. In Britain, the editorial in the *Daily Telegraph* of February 20 about 'the natural Western bias' and 'pro-Western orientation' of Adenauer Germany, i.e. of West German imperialism; and a full length article in the same paper on July 31 building up its whole case for an anti-Soviet British foreign policy on prattle about 'the indissoluble integration of the Federal Republic into Europe', might be regarded as voicing one trend out of several in the Tory Party. But as for the United States, here is the account of a passage in President Eisenhower's press conference on July 22 (*Daily Express*, July 23, 1959).

> **At his press conference President Eisenhower was also asked: 'What assurances do we have that a re-armed Germany, soon to be given American nuclear know-how and weapons, will not turn against the West as it has done twice in a generation? Is such a calculated risk justified?'**

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The President replied: 'If you have a struggle with two people or any group of people it behoves you to decide where your greatest danger is. This doesn't mean that you shouldn't have your eye on eventual potentialities. But when those potentialities look as low as I think they are, I would rather have Germany strong and my friend.'

Of course, this remark did not pass unheeded by the men and women who are waging a struggle for peace in the United States—against the hydrogen bomb, against NATO and for friendship with the Soviet Union. And of course their pressure, coming together with pressure from very different quarters—within the American ruling class itself and outside the U.S.A. as well—was primarily responsible for the decision of President Eisenhower to agree to an exchange of visits with N. S. Khrushchov.

Those meetings can be made to lead to a veritable turning point in post-War history. But the announcement of the decisions brought significant outbursts of anger in Bonn, Rome and among British and American die-hards, that must be taken as a warning. It will not be so easy to ensure a final breakaway from the policy of trying to set German aggression on to the U.S.S.R.—the habit has become too ingrained, and its addicts are too powerful. Yet such a breakaway must be made, if the world is to be saved from self-destruction. The lessons of 1939 are as fresh today, in that respect, as ever they were.

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THE LAST RADICAL

Wilfred Macartney*

ALL parties are preparing for a General Election — including Jo Grimond's group of Liberals, who tell us the Liberal Party has a future. It may do some of them good to learn that they have a past. Let us glance back at it.

Just over fifty years ago, in the spring of 1908, Asquith became Prime Minister. He succeeded Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, whose name was not Bannerman anyhow. C.-B., as he was affectionately known, was the richest Prime Minister of the century ; he had the largest majority of any Prime Minister since the reform Parliament of 1832. His majority is still the largest of this century (one cannot really count the Ramsey MacDonald mongrel majority of 1931). He was a better scholar than either Salisbury, Balfour, or Asquith ; and this needled them beyond measure. He had taken a first in the mathematical tripos and a first in classical moderations besides having won the Cowan Gold Medal for Greek at Glasgow University before going to Trinity, Cambridge. He was more radical than Attlee and far to the left of Gaitskell. He introduced old age pensions and when Chief Secretary for Ireland he brought peace to the troubled land, a temporary one but nevertheless peace ; Tim Healy ruefully remarked, 'C.-B. governed Ireland with Scotch jokes.' He put the first Socialist John Burns in the Cabinet. He gave Winston Churchill his first Government post.

Campbell-Bannerman was a Scotsman born Campbell, the son and grandson of Conservative members of Parliament. He inherited a large fortune from his maternal uncle and added the name Bannerman and the fortune to the equally large fortune he received from his father. He spoke good French, he was *bon vivant,* his cigars were better than those of Edward VII, his knowledge of wine superior, and everything he did was in admirable taste which, alas, cannot be said of Edward VII. Sir Compton Mackenzie has his wardrobe !

His Conservative background is so expressive of the delirious inconsistencies of British political life ; Gladstone starting as a Conservative, Disraeli as a Radical, Maxton a Tory, Walter Elliott as a Socialist, while Winston Churchill plays Russian roulette with the parties, never copping the full chamber.

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*W. Macartney, author of the first-born of the Left Book Club *Walls have Mouths*, is preparing a monograph on Campbell-Bannerman.

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Campbell-Bannerman led the Liberal Party for eight years in the desolate desert and got them to the promised land with a huge majority. While out and in not only did he have to fight a Tory majority as power-crazy and irresponsible as any, but he had to foil the deadly murder-bent intrigues of the Liberal Imperialists, of Rosebery, of Grey and Asquith. The Liberal split which was supposed to open up in parliamentary factions of 1917-8 really began in 1902 when Bannerman spoke in a vote of censure on the Tory government who had inaugurated the first concentration camps in the world and succeeded in killing 20,000 Boer women and children. Asquith and Grey turned their backs on their leader and with fifty other hyphenated Liberals walked out of the House. This may have been a blessing in disguise, for Rosebery convinced Balfour that there was a real split—and this later ended in his disaster.

Just before Bannerman became Prime Minister, Asquith and Grey entered with gusto into an intrigue against him with Knollys, King Edward VII's private secretary. The mechanics of this dastardly attempt to supplant their leader was feudal. When Campbell-Bannerman saw the King he stooped to kiss hands, Edward VII repeatedly withdrew his hand. After three attempts Bannerman backed out of the room, the King stood still. Now, to Courtier-Palace minds Bannerman was not Prime Minister. When he returned to Downing Street he found Asquith waiting who begged him to go to the House of Lords, using the age-old trick of aspiring politicians: 'It's your health I am thinking of. This hurts me more than it hurts you', etc., etc. Grey refused the Foreign Office thinking that he and Asquith were strong enough to get rid of this inconvenient Radical who had been uninterruptedly in the House for 40 years and who had recently taken another Radical, David Lloyd George, under his wing. But C.-B. trumped the ill-health card with a card that is even stronger in British politics; he would have to consult his wife. Lady Bannerman was on her way from Scotland. She arrived. She was standing no nonsense. She said: 'No surrender'. And Grey and Asquith, after crying their woes from club to club, from clique to clique, from cabal to cabal, gave in. Grey's letter to Margot Asquith, that 'donna fatale' of the Liberal Party was, after all the comings and goings, pathetic.

'Fallodon,'
December 11th, 1905.

Dear Mrs. Asquith,

My bolt is shot . . . As to the Government, the only declarations of policy which count are those of the Prime Minister; having entered his Government my statements will be in line with his as long as I am in it.

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The philosopher R. B. Haldane, who had ganged up with Asquith and Grey, was relegated to the War Office with C.-B.'s words : ' We will put Schopenhauer in the kailyaird.'*

So Campbell-Bannerman entered into his two and a half years administration. The great social measures of that heyday of Liberalism are recorded and honoured while their inspirer seems to be completely forgotten. The ifs and ands of history and politics are said to be sterile ; but had Campbell-Bannerman kept his health and vigour the Irish question would undoubtedly have been settled without bloodshed. The peers and the Palace and the cavalry generals of the Curragh may well have funked the unambiguous Bannerman where they stalled the equivocal Asquith. Old age pensions and health measures might have been much more generous ; and the Germans were really frightened of Clemenceau's friend, so that maybe millions of young Englishmen and Frenchmen need not have died. But alas ! it was not to be so. In March, 1908, he caught the 'flu, went to bed and got steadily worse. Pneumonia came, it ebbed and flowed as it had a habit of doing in those days ; he made a gesture of resignation which was avidly seized upon by Asquith and the others. King Edward VII had gone to his beloved Biarritz. Before he went he visited Campbell-Bannerman on his sick-bed at Downing Street. These two men, so similar in externals, so different inside, may have been friends for a moment or two. Asquith scorched down to Biarritz and on April 7, 1908, in the Hotel du Palais kissed hands ; no withholding here ! Asquith did his deed of handkissing on a Sunday, which brought down on him the wrath of Presbyterian synods ; he had broken the Lord's Day, and it boded his brand-new government no good.

On April 8, the new Prime Minister arrived at Charing Cross Station to the immense enthusiasm of thousands of his supporters. In deserted lonely Downing Street the leader who had brought the Liberal Party to its greatest victory lay gasping his life out. It is not recorded that either Grey or Asquith saw him before he died. In two and a half years they had frittered the Liberal majority away.

There was a lot of comment at the time that a Prime Minister of England should kiss hands on foreign soil. Someone said to F. E. Smith, later Lord Birkenhead : ' Would you kiss hands on foreign soil ?' Said Freddy Smith : ' I'd kiss hands in hell.'

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*Equivalent to ' He can go out into the garden and eat worms.

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THE INTELLIGENT VOTER'S GUIDE

The prospect of a general election, endlessly discussed by the newspapers for the last twelve months, now seems at last to be a likelihood for the autumn of this year. As a guide in the political discussions now beginning to be held in every trade union and co-operative store, in every factory and workshop, LABOUR MONTHLY prints below eight questions which should help to focus attention on some essentials in the working out of a policy and, when the election comes, on the decision how to vote.

We invite our readers to let us know their views. These questions, drawn up at the beginning of August, were sent to a dozen Labour councillors and others. Some of the replies that have already come in follow on next pages. Replies from readers should reach us in the first nine days of September.—Ed., L.M.

1. What is your opinion of *The Next Steps*, the joint Labour Party—T.U.C. policy statement ?

2. Are the seven points of the Transport and General Workers' Union resolution* the kind of policy which can win the support of the majority of people ?

3. What is needed to defeat the Tories at a General Election ?

4. The Tories claim that their efforts are promoting peace and international understanding. Do you believe that in fact Tory policies are peace policies ?

5. The Tories claim that their policies are promoting prosperity at home. Would you contest this claim ? If so, on what grounds ?

6. How would you answer the often-heard argument that it would make little difference if a Labour Government was elected in place of a Tory Government ?

7. What policies are needed to guarantee full employment ?

8. Would you support a policy of further nationalisation and if so, along what lines ?

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*This resolution is reprinted in full on page 415 as Document of the Month.

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Councillor Abe Wolffe (Labour), West Ham, London :

You ask, ' What is needed to defeat the Tories at a General Election ?' And my answer is : A bold policy without ambiguity, aimed towards establishing a socialist state of society as envisaged in the constitution of the Labour Party and reiterated by its founders and sincere supporters. You may ask, ' What should that policy be, and how do we know it will bring in the votes ?' My answer is : The policy should make it quite clear that the Labour Party aims towards establishing Socialism by taking the following preliminary steps.

1. Nationalise every essential industry with the workers in the industry running and controlling it. At present workers in nationalised industries regard themselves in the same light as those engaged in private industry. So the first step must be to establish confidence by (a) removing from responsible and directing posts all who got their positions merely on the strength of having a title, or because they are retired generals and admirals, with no knowledge of the industry or those who work in it ; (b) replacing them by skilled employees, and (c) the fullest possible consultation with all engaged in the enterprise.

2. Encourage local authorities to build more houses by reducing interest rates on loans to a token percentage.

3. Guarantee full employment by establishing friendly relations with all countries and trade without restrictions or strings.

4. Take positive steps to get agreement with all countries to abolish nuclear weapons on the lines of the Transport Workers' resolution.

5. Re-distribute wealth by taxing more heavily those who can afford it and giving more to pensioners, widows and orphans.

6. Reduce arms expenditure and spend more on education and health.

7. Abolish the remnants of the Colonial system and aid the freed Colonies to establish themselves by trading and financial help.

How do I know the votes will come ? Answer : in 1945 Labour swept the country with its progressive policy despite the hero-worship of Churchill after his successes in the war. Only a bold policy will shake the people out of their apathy and rally them to Labour. Most people are tired of being ruled by the Tories, but as things are they cannot place any hopes in a Labour Government improving their lot. A programme based on my proposals will rally the mass of the people once more round the banner of the Labour Party and return their candidates with an overwhelming majority, opening the way for the first steps towards a Socialist society in Britain.

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County Councillor Renée Short, Watford, prospective Labour candidate :

How would I refute the Tories' claim that they are promoting peace abroad and prosperity at home ? The squalid record of this Tory government must make all decent people flinch at the thought that there could possibly be another vote of confidence given to such a gang. Abroad, the crimes of Suez, Cyprus and Africa brought the risk of world war very close and made Britain's name stand for repression, gun-boat politics and the police state. At home, we have had a demonstration of the real meaning of the Tory poster : ' Life's Better with the Conservatives '. So it is—for a few. Certainly the take-over merchants who operate on the stock exchange have never had it so good. The Clores, the Frasers, the Josephs and the rest can make millions of profit almost overnight. Big Business has much to be grateful for to this government which believes that private profit should take precedence over the good of the nation. The rest, however, saw the meaning of Tory prosperity earlier this year when unemployment figures were higher than for twenty years. Young people leaving school had a taste of what a Tory government will offer them—dole queue and months of unemployment before they find a job. Printworkers and engineers know now what it means to fight for a decent wage and a reasonable working week ; old age pensioners know a decent pension has been refused them year after year. Ask them if living is better under the Conservatives ! Behind this façade of sham prosperity, rising share prices and carefully generated psychosis of well-being, industry stagnates and production falls in mines, railways, shipping, steel, cotton and building, with injustice and cynicism abounding.

Those who say a Labour government would make little difference must be barmy or dishonest. The people elected a Labour Government in 1945 to clear up the appalling aftermath of the war. When we had done that within the framework of capitalism, the Tories were put back in the saddle. Here lies a vital lesson for Labour. We must carry out our avowed policy of investing in industry, maintaining full employment again, developing and expanding at home and exporting abroad ; but we must also pursue our Socialist aims and take into public ownership the vital industries on which economic power and well-being depend. Above all, that most terrible threat of H-bomb warfare will be removed from the world. The Tories are stuck with the H-bomb and like it ; Labour is pledged to abolish it in one way or another. The Tories with enormous publicity apparatus do their utmost to confuse voters and make their own policies look respectable. It is essential to show that not merely would Labour do better, but that they would do an entirely different and greatly superior job of work for the people.

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Leo McGree, Merseyside trade union official.

It is of particular importance that Labour emerges now as a leading force for peace because Britain is now the most heavily concentrated area of nuclear armament in the world, and the most deeply committed country in the NATO camp. Not only is Britain in the most vulnerable position as a forward NATO base, but increasingly this country is affected by the dangerous swings of American foreign policy, her subservience being accentuated by the tame acceptance of the H-bombers transferred from France. Moreover, any weakness by Labour now and failure to respond to the needs of the moment and the deep desires of the people, plays directly into the hands of the Tory propagandists, who are dressing up Macmillan as the Man of Peace who paved the way first for the Geneva Foreign Ministers' meeting and now for the reciprocal visits of the Soviet and American heads of state. Already in home affairs Labour's acceptance of the theory of managed capitalism has lost them considerable initiative, in spite of the serious growth of unemployment affecting docks and shipping on Merseyside, coal and cotton in Lancashire and all the previously depressed areas. As a result the latest Cohen Committee recommendation that prices can now safely be cut gives the Tories yet another opportunity of posing as national benefactors, even though it was the policy advocated by the same wise men that helped the Tories to enlarge their pool of unemployed.

Changes in policy and approach are needed in home economic questions; but the most urgent sphere for the emergence of Labour's 'different image' is in relation to the need for a dynamic peace policy that throws aside all the dangerous aspects of bi-partisanship that have devitalised the movement for a long time. There is need for a complete break with NATO, uncompromising abandonment of all nuclear strategy and new clear-sighted leadership through top level negotiation to disengagement and progressive relaxation of tension. The new T.U.C.—L.P. statement which re-affirms the NATO war alliance and justifies the continuance of H-weapons under the smoke screen of the non-nuclear club, will not do. The movement will advance both the cause of world peace and its own electoral prospects by uncompromisingly adopting the lead given in the Seven-point Resolution of the Transport Workers.

WAS IT LATE?

Was your copy of *Labour Monthly* late last month? Why not take out a subscription? Even in times of trial and tribulation you can be sure of getting it early. Rates on back page of cover.

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STOP PLAYING THE TORY GAME!

Councillor Peter Grimshaw*

ALTHOUGH councils of many industrial towns are Labour-controlled, yet in some respects we often find little difference in final results. This is because what they are doing is to administer Tory legislation. True, the position is better than if the Tories were in control; but in many cases it amounts to only a more liberal administration of Tory policy.

Take housing. Labour councils have a good record of building—within the limits set by the Tory Government. But rents? These have continually increased since the war and Labour councils have been guilty of raising rents to balance the housing revenue account. The major factor is money-lender's interest on loans. In 1947 the rate of interest on money borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board was 2½ per cent, which for a £2,000 house was equal to 18s. 6d. per week after deducting the subsidy at that time of £16 10s. (about 6s. 4d. per week). Today the rate is 5¾ per cent or £1 17s. 4d. per week after deducting the present subsidy of £22 1s. (about 8s. 6d. per week). So 18s. 10d. more per week goes into the moneylender's pocket than in 1947. But when we look into the subsidy, we find that even this goes to him. In short, at the 1947 rate of interest the moneylender would receive £1 4s. 10d. per week for sixty years, or £3,872; at present rates it would be £2 5s. 9d. or £7,140.

Such is the crushing burden of the policy of the Tory Government serving the interests of their class. Labour councillors who support rent increases are aiding them in this and betraying the workers in the fight for socialism. Yet we hear even Labour councillors talking in terms of people 'who live in slums having to subsidise council house tenants through rates', and press stories of council house tenants owning cars 'at the expense of those who subsidise rents'. Let it be clearly understood; it is the moneylender who is subsidised, at the expense of both the council house tenant and the ratepayer wherever he may be living.

This July, Mr. Henry Brooke, the Minister of Housing and Local Government, came to Salford to open his 'New Homes for Old' Exhibition with a flourish of trumpets, heralding the goodness of Toryism. With other Labour Councillors, I was not impressed by this Tory idea of 'improving' houses that are eighty years old. What is wanted is real homes at rents that the workers can afford to pay, not patched-up slums.

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*Councillor Grimshaw, as many of our readers will know, is Editor of *Salford Labour Voice*. Secretary of the city Labour Party.

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The hard core of the Salford Labour Group is concerned to get on with the job of building new homes. It was the same Henry Brooke who kept us battling many months because we wanted to build by direct labour 711 multi-storey flats. The Tories, right-wing Labour and Mr. Brooke, were for the job being done by private builders; after all £1,750,000 of business was at stake. This scheme was to take three years; direct labour will complete it in half the time, and about £100,000 more cheaply than the private builder; add to this the interest that would have had to be paid and the saving is nearly £400,000. Tenants will be rehoused so much earlier; which, apart from the social value of it, means more rent revenue. In all something approaching £500,000 will go to the credit of the Salford Housing Department, at the expense of the private builder and moneylender.

No Labour Council can reduce the interest rates, but it can refuse to play the Tory game of increasing rents. The Salford Housing Committee recently turned down proposals for increasing rents of 4,591 houses and flats by an average of nearly 5s. per week. This was designed to bring in an extra £50,000 per year to balance the housing revenue account. It will mean a real fight within the Labour Group between those who prefer to follow up the Tory policies and those who will fight in the interests of the people. The right-wing may aim for a compromise by making a less 'severe increase, the rest to be met by the rates'; or by cutting social services instead. But either way the burden would be on the people. The real fight will be led by those who stand for no rent increases, however small, and against the burden being placed on the ratepayer. They will fight for the policy of the Salford Labour Party and refuse to balance the housing revenue account, even if this resulted in members of the council being surcharged.

Labour councillors should be prepared to go to jail before helping the Tories to place the burden on the backs of the people. Some weak-kneed councillors are already saying that the Minister might hit back by refusing future loan sanction. But my reply to both these possibilities is: rely on the might of the whole Labour movement. Let every section of the Labour Party, every trade union branch, and the co-operative movement be brought into a campaign behind Labour councils which stand firm: the Ministry of Housing would be powerless. It would sound the death-knell of the Tory Government, and pave the way for a Labour Government pledged to a policy of peace, homes and full employment, harnessing the people in the fight for socialism.

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DOCUMENT OF THE MONTH

SEVEN POINTS FOR PEACE

BELOW is the text of the resolution on peace of the Transport and General Workers' Union, adopted at its biennial conference on July 9, 1959. It was moved by the General Secretary, Mr. Frank Cousins, in a speech which contained the memorable statement : ' I have never believed that the most important thing in our lives was to elect a Labour Government. The most important thing in our lives is to elect a Labour Government that is determined to carry out socialist policies.'

That this Conference, conscious of the dangers of an accidental drift into war with the attendant risk of the use of nuclear weapons, aware of the great dangers to present and future generations caused by radio-activity and strontium 90 fall-out arising from the testing of thermo-nuclear weapons, recognising the grave situation existing in relation to the possible spreading of the ownership of nuclear weapons :

(a) repudiates the idea of basing defence policies on the threat of the use of such weapons ;

(b) rejects the proposal contained in the joint declaration issued by the Labour Party and the T.U.C. for the formation of a non-nuclear weapons-owning group of nations, in the belief that such a proposal in the terms set out in the joint declaration cannot contribute toward the establishing of world peace ; and

(c) believing that the great majority of the people of this country are seeking a positive leadership on this subject, asks the Labour Party to press forward with a vigorous policy which will include a clear declaration that a Labour Government will, when returned to office, base our defence and foreign programmes policy on the following :

1. A complete and permanent cessation by Great Britain of the testing of nuclear weapons ;

2. Nuclear bombs or rockets with nuclear warheads not to be used first by Great Britain or from our territory ;

3. A reaffirmation of statements made by the Labour Party that suspension of tests means a suspension of production ;

4. That patrols of aircraft based in Britain carrying hydrogen bombs be discontinued forthwith ;

5. A restoration of the principle of political, as distinct from military, control over the use of all weapons of mass destruction ;

6. The continuation of the objection to setting up missile bases in Great Britain ;

7. Making every effort through Summit talks and such other means as are necessary to reach a stage-by-stage agreement with all the major Powers on the implementation of multilateral disarmament, such agreement to include a satisfactory system of inspection and control under the authority of the United Nations' Organisation based on the need for peaceful co-existence.

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TO OUR INTELLIGENT READERS

There is no doubt that the stand of Frank Cousins and the Transport and General Workers' Union against nuclear weapons has put fresh heart into many people in the working class movement. For so long that union's enormous vote at the Trades Union Congress and Labour Party Conference went to support right-wing policies. The knowledge that this powerful voice now speaks so strongly for peace has a tonic effect. More such tonics are needed to enthuse and inspire the Labour movement so that it is fighting fit to meet and beat the Tories in the General Election.

Controversy on vital issues, argument and good ideas are great stimulants. Hence our Intelligent Voter's Guide and hence our appeal to our intelligent readers for extra-special efforts to sell more copies, spread the debate and the good ideas in the vital autumn months.

Think of the value of getting the September LABOUR MONTHLY, with the articles by Robert Willis, Fred Gannnaway and Peter Grimshaw, not to mention the Notes, into the hands of the delegates to the T.U.C. and Labour Party Conference. We have our plans for those events—what about you? Can you approach those who will attend from your area? Can you cover the report-back meetings that will be held?

We have other plans for autumn campaigning, including circulation-raising trips by our Manager to different parts of the country. Our plans include the assumption that you too will be hard at it. The Intelligent Voter's Guide will continue after September. Can you for this month and later list people to visit—Labour workers, young people undecided on where their vote shall go, or local trade union and co-operative organisation officials. Ask them to take and read LABOUR MONTHLY'S election discussion forum and, if they feel like it, to join in too.

The Tory Government's stock slumped more than somewhat with the Nyasaland and Hola events. A reading of D. N. Pritt's forceful comments on the Devlin Report can send it slipping still more. This is a most valuable article worthy of the widest circulation in the Labour movement—where there are still some fancy ideas lingering about the Empire! And worth special attempts too to get it into the hands of workers here from the colonial countries.

Will you think over our suggestions and decide, as part of your effort to finish off the Tories, to fill in now, right away, the campaign form on the back page of the cover, saying that you will volunteer to gain new readers and asking for the campaign copies which we are prepared to supply to you on credit. G.B.

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(continued from page ii of cover)

to carry on, hoping for their victory as a step forward to the general victory of the working class.' A *Londoner* found the Treasury lottery 'Ernie' had 'come up with a little one' and sent us 10 per cent. A *printworker* wrote: 'As secretary of the Typographical Association here, I hope that donors to the fund from the printing dispute will increase their donations from the rise.' From *Notts.*: 'Thanks for a good July number despite the pig-headed obstinacy of the "herrenvolk meisterprinters."' But we had donations too from readers who are themselves *master printers*, well aware that the small working printer is the victim of monopoly big business and only socialism can hold out a future for their craft. Among overseas readers, a *Finnish-Canadian* wrote that he well appreciated 'the struggle of your printing trade workers. We West-Coast lumber men are also involved in a bitter struggle against the American-controlled monopolies, and it is not a "gala holiday", to quote your *Manchester Guardian.*' Another *Canadian* subscriber wrote off by return with 'a couple of dollars to do what little I can to help your great fight'. A special gift came from an *Edinburgh* reader who was 'moved to tears' by D. H. Calcutt's article last month, *The Morning After the 'Tonight' Before.* It was 10s. sent 'in memory of one who never came back to claim his Ethel. As I look back over the years I glory that the U.S.S.R. avenged "us" over "them", and that the lads who died choking in the mud of Passchendaele while the bonehead Haig was claiming his "epic" victories, would laugh if they knew the ultimate result.'

Readers gave because they wanted to 'help *L.M.* to counteract the "Lie Drug"'. During the dispute they became keenly aware of how 'the supporters and apologists for capitalism become more brazen and reckless in their lying and distortion and suppression of the truth'. They wanted to hit back at 'the grossly impudent falsehoods on the radio'. An ex-miner from *Notts.* was particularly forceful about the behaviour of 'so-called Labour papers, whose only object is to gull their readers and make huge profits'. He added that he often told his Labour Party friends that 'the test and touchstone to an understanding of the Labour movement is most often to be found among the readers of *L.M.*—not among the leaders of the Labour Party'.

The July fund, you will be delighted to see, is doubled by these crisis gifts and not far short of £100. If only we could rely on that figure each month, instead of our essential development plans being hampered for lack of mere cash to pay the bills for it. So it is a good sign that the crisis has brought to us a few new regulars, like 'Anti-Tory', of *Liverpool*, who sends 5s., and will try 'to find something each month'. And the *Londoner* who is 'trying to send £1 a week for an old and familiar inspiration'. Let a Canadian who always follows the fund figures closely sum up: 'I think it is better to see the fund made up of a lot of small amounts than a few large ones.' (I would amend that to—*as well as a few large ones!*) As I write we are in the first half of the 'dangerous' holiday month, knowing that we cannot be back to normal printing until next issue. Please do not overlook the other half of our appeal, the winning of new readers, which we feel *L.M.* deserves. See Campaign Page 416.

ANGELA TUCKETT,

134, Ballards Lane, London, N.3.

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